

**BOLTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
SPECIAL MEETING  
7:00 PM, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2023  
NOTCH ROAD MUNICIPAL CENTER ROOM B  
In-Person and Virtual (Hybrid Format)**

**MINUTES**

**Board of Selectmen Members Present In-Person:** First Selectman Pamela Sawyer, Deputy First Selectman Robert Morra, Adam Teller

**Board of Selectmen Members Present Via Zoom:** Michael Eremita, Robert DePietro (arrived 7:13 p.m.)

**Staff Present In-Person:** Town Administrator James Rupert

**Staff Present Via Zoom:** Recording Secretary Linda H. McDonald

**Others Present Via Zoom:** Nick Lavigne (Community Voice Channel), Fire Chief Bruce Dixon, Deputy Chief Matt Perriera

**Others Present In-Person:** Jim Loersch, Rodney Fournier, Amanda Gordon, Mather Clarke, Gwen Marrion, Tim Sadler

- 1. Call to Order:** P. Sawyer called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m. She reflected on her time as First Selectman, stating it has been an absolute privilege to serve as First Selectman and it has been an honor to serve with the board members. She thanked those who served with her, working on the many issues important to the town.
  
- 2. Public Comment:**

Jim Loersch of Brookfield Road expressed his concern with the condition of the town hall and commented that the town has to really think about a new town hall at the location of the Notch Road Municipal Building.

Rodney Fournier thanked the current board for their service and said he looks forward to working with the new board.
  
- 3. Approval of Minutes:**
  - 3.a Regular Meeting Minutes -October 3, 2023:**

M. Eremita MOVED to approve the October 3, 2023 regular meeting minutes as presented. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:1 with R. Morra abstaining.
  
  - 3.b Special A/P Meeting Minutes–October 17, 2023:**

R. Morra MOVED to approve the October 17, 2023 special meeting minutes as presented. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.
  
  - 3.c Special A/P Meeting Minutes– November 2, 2023:**

M. Eremita MOVED to approve the November 2, 2023 special A/P meeting minutes as presented. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.
  
- 4. Appointments and Resignations:**

**4.a Resignation of Trish Brudz as Library Assistant II:**

A. Teller MOVED that the Board of Selectmen to accept with appreciation and regret the resignation of Trish Brudz as Library Assistant II. R. Morra SECONDED. R. DePietro commented she has been very helpful, not only with the library programs but with taxpayers that have had come forward with problems. He said he will really miss her. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

**4.b Resignation of Randy Heckman as Building Official effective 11/17/23:**

R. Morra MOVED that the Board of Selectmen accept with appreciation and regret the resignation of Randy Heckman as Building Official effective 11/17/23. M. Eremita SECONDED. R. Morra commented he appreciates his service to the town and wishes him the best of luck in his new venture. M. Eremita commented R. Heckman is professional, competent, and a good person to work with. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

**4.c Appointment Letter for James Lockhart as Vernon Assistant Animal Control Officer :**

R. Morra MOVED to accept the appointment of James Lockhart as Assistant Animal Control Officer. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

**5. Correspondence: Jay Brudz-Selectman's Salary Letter:**

P. Sawyer said the board received a letter regarding the First Selectman's salary issue that was brought up during public comment at the October 3, 2023 meeting. She said the letter from Jay Brudz, prior member of the Charter Commission, takes exception with some of the comments that were said and the public comment regarding the Charter revision intent.

As a former member of the Charter Commission, A. Teller stated that Mr. Brudz's comments are totally accurate and he endorses his recollection.

P. Sawyer said this is something (possible changes to the compensation and benefits for the office of First Selectman) the new board can look at if they wish to bring it forward. She added it would be beneficial to have a public hearing on this if the matter is brought forward.

**6. Ongoing Business:**

**6.a Possibly Consider and Act on Donation of Fire Truck (based on fair market value):**

P. Sawyer read a text she received from M. Eremita about the prices of comparable vehicles: a 1997 E1 fire truck pumper with tank - \$9,500; a 1995 Spartan Laverne pumper 1500/1000 - \$10,000; a 1993 International - \$20,500; 1974 Maxim F Model fire truck - \$7,500. .

Fire Chief Dixon commented on the letter he sent to the Town Administrator on his research reaching out to various sources and he said he received three responses on different kinds of trucks. He noted the Eastern Connecticut Fire School has raised its offer to \$6,000 in training for the fire department members in exchange for the donation of the fire truck.

Deputy Fire Chief M. Perriera said he agrees that the fire truck does not have any value outside the fire department and the best option is to donate the truck to Eastern CT Fire School.

R. Morra commented it is a fiscally sound move to donate the truck for fire training as it is too costly for the town to maintain and insure.

Adam Teller said he has no objection to donating the truck to the fire school.

R. DePietro said he sees the truck as a viable piece of equipment that should be kept and used by the town, if needed.

M. Perriera said, currently, there is no space to store the truck. Discussion followed on the lack of space to store the truck if retained by the town and possible ideas to create a space.

R. Morra MOVED to donate the ET to the Eastern CT Fire School as a lifetime exchange for \$6,000 worth of training for the members of the Bolton Volunteer Fire Department. M. Eremita SECONDED.

Chief Dixon said the donation would be a welcome addition to the fire school and definitely needed.

P. Sawyer said she concurs with the donation of the truck as it would be going to a mutual aid service.

MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

**7. New Business**

**7.a Consider and Act on Proposed 2024 BOS Meeting Dates:**

R. Morra MOVED to approve the following 2024 Board of Selectmen regular meeting dates:

Tuesday, January 2

Tuesday, February 6

Tuesday, March 5

Tuesday, April 2

Tuesday, May 7

Tuesday, June 4

Tuesday, July 2

Tuesday, August 6

Tuesday, September 3

Tuesday, October 8

Tuesday, November 12

Tuesday, December 3

All 2024 BOS regular meetings are scheduled for 7:00 p.m.

Adam Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

**7.b Discussion on Lane Widths on Route 44:**

J. Rupert commented on the letter from Sylvia Ounpui and Barbara Amodio of Bike Walk Bolton on making Route 44 safer for all road users in Bolton. Their issue is that the lines on Route 44 were re-painted recently without taking into account the CTDOT recommended "road diet" (reducing the lane widths and increasing shoulder widths. They wrote to find out if the town would be willing to request from the DOT that a correction be made to the sections of the lane areas on Route 44 that are wider (in some cases up to 6 feet wider) than the current DOT guidelines for this type of road.

R. Morra asked why the state has that width for lanes.

R. DePietro noted this would only be an advisory recommendation from the town.

R. Morra MOVED to engage the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) to inquire if there is a reason why the lanes on Route 44 could not be made narrower. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

**7.c Discussion on Speeding Traffic Around Town:**

J. Rupert reported the town has heard from many residents about speeding around town. He has spoken with the state troopers and they are trying to find a balance to keep traffic under control.

**8. Reports and Updates:**

**8.a Properties and Facilities Administrator Report:**

**8.a.1 Temporary Building:**

J. Rupert reported there are finishing issues with the unit that have been acknowledged by Willscot. Electricity has been connected to the building, which will make it easier for the company to fix the issues. J. Rupert said the town has not accepted the building and will walk through the unit for final acceptance when Willscot has finished their work.

**8.b.2 Connectivity Trail:**

J. Rupert reported Landie Construction notified they should be on the trail this Friday or next Monday, should finish up in about 10 days and then will move over to the temporary building to help with the water and septic connections.

**8.a.3 Possible Plans for Taking Down the Notch Road Municipal Center and Vision for that**

**Space:** J. Rupert reported the town is finalizing bid documents for design professional services to assist with the tear-down and rebuilding process. He said the town would also like the bid-winning company to help put bid specs together for the tear-down of the structure.

Discussion followed on the possible contamination of materials on the site after the structure comes down. No action taken.

**8.b FY 24 Budget Report:** J. Rupert reported there are no red flags in the report. The tax collector's report is also on track. No action needed.

**8.c A/P Report:**

M. Eremita MOVED that the Board of Selectmen accept the A/P report as presented. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

**8.d Budget Transfers:** No action needed.

**9. First Selectman's Report:**

P. Sawyer reported that the Town Administrator has been very forthcoming with issues to share on their updates. She said many of the issues in her report have been covered in this meeting.

**10. Administrative Officer's Report**

**10.a Monthly Report:**

J. Rupert reported on the following:

- Submitted additional information to the CT Department of Public Health for the STEAP Grant regarding the septic system
- He attended the awards ceremony and accepted the Sustainable CT Award with Patric Carson. He thanked P. Carson , Amanda Gordon and staff for helping to put the information together for this program.
- Town Meeting was held regarding the Teachers' Contract
- Opioid information was submitted to the CT Conference of Municipalities
- Capital Budget package was sent to all department heads
- Paperwork was submitted to the Diocese of Norwich for the polling location
- Various staff participated in the State emergency preparedness exercise
- A quarter staff meeting was held where the budget was discussed and copies of the adopted financial policy manual was provided to all department heads
- The Truck or Treat event was very successful
- The annual drug takeback was held at the RST office
- The annual report process has begun
- Took delivery of the new building
- Moved the Registrar of Voters Office to Room A in the NRMB
- Joe Dillon walked the Heritage Farm with Gwen Marrion and Richard Treat to look at the projected pathway route
- Williams Road and a portion of French Road have been paved
- Working on updating the Local Emergency Operations Plan
- Held regular update meeting with Eversource
- Attended the CTCMA meeting
- Attended the monthly Eastern Highlands Health District meeting s well as the personnel subcommittee meeting
- Attended the Capitol Region Policy Board meeting

P. Sawyer recognized the effort put forward by the administration to work with the Registrars of Voters regarding their work to satisfy all their elections needs. She also thanked the Registrars for their work on the election.

**10.b Other:**

The consensus of the members was to hold the next A/P meeting on Tuesday, November 21, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.

The outgoing members addressed the board. Michael Eremita encouraged the new board to stay within the rules but seriously think outside the box when it comes to the future of Bolton. He thanked everyone for allowing him to be with them for the past eight years and he has enjoyed it immensely.

Adam Teller stated he has enjoyed serving with the members of the board. He especially called out P. Sawyer for having taken on this obligation at a difficult time with grace and warmth. He said he values the warmth all the members brought to this board and how well we worked together. He said he recognizes how deeply they all care about the town. He thanked the

people of Bolton for allowing him to serve and the new members for being willing to serve and give back to their community.

Robert DePietro thanked everyone. He said he is not going anywhere and will be “bugging you”.

P. Sawyer said this has been a very special part of her life. She said she has been rewarded by some very gracious people who helped her, and in turn, helped her turn it around and give back. She stated it has been wonderful to work with Mr. Teller, Mr. Eremita, Mr. Morra, and Mr. Pietro and come forward with many new outside the box ideas. She said she looks forward to where the future of the town is going.

**11. Executive Session: Discussion on Personnel Evaluation – Administrator Officer**

R. Morra MOVED the Board of Selectmen enter Executive Session at 8:59 p.m. for the purpose of discussion of the Administrative Officer’s salary and contract and to invite James Rupert to join the session. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

P. Sawyer called the meeting to order at 9:05 p.m. once the board had come out of Executive Session.

**12. Consider and Act on Evaluation for Administrator Officer:**

A. Teller MOVED to approve the evaluation just discussed in Executive Session, being the five draft evaluations done by this board and putting them together with R. Morra’s summary sheet scoring this as a whole, making this the evaluation of the Town Administrator as a whole. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

A. Teller MOVED for a resolution from the Board of Selectmen that has worked with Mr. Rupert over the last year, and we recommend to the Board that takes office shortly to approve the following:

1. Mr. Rupert be offered a new 2-year contract with similar terms as the last contract as Town Administrator, taking effect at the end of this contract. (starting July 1, 2024)
2. That Mr. Rupert be offered a salary increase of 2.52% for the 1<sup>st</sup> year of that contract, retroactive to July 1, 2023.
3. A wage reopener for the Town Administrator’s contract the second year.

R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

**13. Adjournment:** A. Teller MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 p.m. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

Respectfully submitted by Linda H. McDonald *Linda H. McDonald*

Please see the minutes of subsequent meetings for the approval of these minutes and any corrections hereto.